CHAPTER II

THE FILIPINO PEOPLE[1]

ORIGIN, LEGENDARY AND SCIENTIFIC[2]

"THE people," wrote Mencius, the Chinese sage, "are the most important element in a nation; the spirit of the land and grain are next 5 the sovereign is the least in importance." And it is of the people—the Filipino people—their origin, nationality, social system, and characteristics that I would write.

A northern legend in the Philippines and one quite similar in the southern islands purports to tell how man was created. A very long time ago—so the tale runs—a god and a goddess inhabited the earth, and becoming lonesome took clay, moulded it, and baked it. At the first attempt the inexperienced deities baked the clay too long. At the second attempt, becoming over-cautious, they did not bake it long enough. But at the third attempt the clay was baked just right. When life was breathed into the figures, they became the black race, the white race, and the brown race. The Filipinos belonging to the brown race were thus the perfect product of the gods.

The anthropologists and ethnologists offer more scientific, if less traditional, explanation of the ancestry of the Filipino people. They inform us that racially three varieties of man occur in the Philippines—the Negritos, the Indonesians, and the Malays. First came the Australoids, who have long since disappeared, and the Negritos, dwarfs of low intelligence,

'-This chapter was read by Dr. H. Otley Beyer, Head of the Department **of** Anthropology and Sociology, University of the Philippines. See A. L, Kroeber, ***P*a$ks*** *of thePfflityines,* revised edition of 192$.

[2] See Dr. Najeeb M. Saleeby, *Origin of the Malayan Filipinos* **(1912).**